



Gold Star Families Tribute Lost Heroes Art Quilt

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer
Tuesday, June 22, 2010

I have to tell you, that, as I sat at my desk -- and looked at pictures of this quilt -- I found myself at a loss for words.

What could I possibly say to all of you that would add to the reverence and tribute this quilt expresses for the loss each of these service men and women; the loss to our State and our Nation?

There are no words that could express any of this.

But, I am a mother and I know that there is nothing that can compare with the loss of one of our children.

A life we brought into this world, nurtured and cared for above all else -- Trying to be a good example, hoping and praying we have taught them to stand tall, have integrity and honor, and to love this great Nation of ours.

As I look at each of you, and as I look at this quilt, I know our Arizona family succeeded in raising service men and women who stood for and cherished those ideals -- ideals they learned from you.

Because of you, they grew into men and women who unselfishly became part of something larger than themselves.

They are Heroes.

I see this quilt traveling the countryside, keeping each of our Heroes' stories alive.

I see the threads of this quilt actually pulling us together and reminding us of the high costs of freedom.

I see this quilt as a symbol to all the world, shouting out that America is the greatest Nation on the face of this earth because we have parents -- and children -- who believe there is no price too high to pay to ensure freedom.

And, as I looked into the faces of the children shown here, I could not help but think of the words of the author who wrote, "Family faces are magic mirrors, looking at people who belong to us, we see the past, present, and future."

The Past. Present. And Future.

In fact, the quilt's creator, Julie Feingold, placed crosses throughout her artwork representing the World War II American Cemetery in Normandy, and the World War I American cemetery at Flanders Field in Belgium -- made famous by John McCrae's poem, "*In Flanders Field*."

In that poem, the fallen soldiers tell us to take up their quarrel with the foe:

To us, from failing hands, they threw the torch.

They ask us to hold it high.

"If ye break faith with us who die," the soldiers say, "We shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders fields."

I see this quilt as holding high the torch, as keeping the faith.

Perhaps it was said best in another poem -- this one by Moina Belle Michael who wrote to answer John McCrae -- and to assure those soldiers in Flanders Field:

We cherish, too, the poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led:
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies.
But lends a lustre to the red
Of the flower that blooms above the dead
In Flanders Fields.

Thank you for inviting me to be part of this remembrance and, for giving me the opportunity to be with you -- to honor our heroes -- those who had a destiny for valor.

God Bless you and your families, God bless our fallen, God bless Arizona and the United States of America.